

Alaska Department of Natural Resources Web Page Requirements and Guidelines

When you publish information on the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) external web servers you are making it available to Alaskans and to the world. Your information represents DNR and the State of Alaska to the web page viewers. It is essential that the information be presented professionally and that it reflects positively on DNR and the State of Alaska. All units which provide official DNR content, including contractors developing web pages for DNR, are subject to these requirements and guidelines.

DNR Webmasters

Each division or major office is responsible for the development and updating of their web pages. A designated employee must be identified by each division as the division webmaster. Additional people within each division can be identified as webmasters for different sections of the division's web pages and work in coordination with the division webmaster. Each division is responsible for providing backup to the division webmaster in case of illness, vacation, etc.

DNR Webmasters Committee

The DNR Webmasters Committee establishes requirements and guidelines for DNR's web presence based upon the state standards. The committee consists of the primary webmasters from each division and major offices.

DNR Web Site Goal

The goal of the Alaska DNR web site is to inform, educate and provide access to DNR information and services in an easy-to-use manner.

Web Page Requirements

State standards have been established which provide a framework for DNR web pages. This document details DNR's additional requirements for consistency across all department web pages. The state standards are available online at <http://www.state.ak.us/local/akpages/ADMIN/info/plan/lookandfeelstandard-final.doc> .

The State of Alaska standards apply to all publicly accessible pages providing official state information by departments, their divisions, programs and all sub-pages including subcontracted sites that represent official business; commissions, authorities, institutes, corporations, boards and councils created by the state which have websites that are hosted on state servers, and/or are supported by state funds.

These standards also apply to web applications. The entry page of a web application will follow the State's/DNR's look and feel standards. The internal pages of a web application should retain the standard look and feel with the option of omitting any navigational elements.

The required elements for all DNR web pages are broken down into these areas:

1. Accessibility
2. Background
3. Fonts/Style Sheet
4. Top navigation bar
5. Meta tags and titles
6. Uniform breadcrumb trails
7. Header
8. Consistent navigation

9. Bottom of page information
10. Footer links and graphics

11. Page width
12. Page body

Requirement 1. Accessibility

"The power of the Web is in its universality. Access by everyone regardless of disability is an essential aspect."

-- Tim Berners-Lee, W3C Director and inventor of the World Wide Web

To ensure to the maximum extent feasible, all department web pages must be accessible to and usable by people with disabilities. Where reasonable, all web pages should be in accordance with the Priority 1 checkpoints established by the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Access Initiative (<http://www.w3.org/WAI/>). The Priority 2 and 3 checkpoints should be satisfied whenever feasible for maximum accessibility. All web pages will provide alternate contact information so the material can be requested in an alternative accessible format if needed.

Further, it is encouraged that state web pages comply with Section 508 guidelines from the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) of the U.S. Federal Government (<http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/508standards.htm>). Those utilizing federal funding to develop web sites are required to comply with Section 508.

Requirement 2. Background

The state web page background graphic is a blue/lighter blue lined background graphic. The graphic is located on the primary DNR web servers at /images/dnrbackground48x48.gif. Pages that require a design wider than 780 pixels, those pages have the option to use a white background and not use the rounded footer corner graphics.

Requirement 3. Fonts/Style Sheet

Common fonts are part of the state's look and feel. The DNR style sheet is built on top of the state-issued style sheet. The common fonts for DNR web pages are:

Purpose	Style Name	Color	Point size	Font families	Text-decoration
Base font		#333333	10	Verdana, Arial, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Links		#3333CC	10	Verdana, Arial, Tahoma, sans-serif	underline
Visited Links			10	Verdana, Arial, Tahoma, sans-serif	underline
Hovering over links		#0066FF	10	Verdana, Arial, Tahoma, sans-serif	underline
Active Link		#3333CC	10	Verdana, Arial, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Top Navigation Bar	header				
Links		#333399	9.5	Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Visited Links		#333399	9.5	Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Hovering over links		#0066CC	9.5	Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Active Links		#000066	9.5	Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	

Purpose	Style Name	Color	Point size	Font families	Text-decoration
Right Sidebar	sidebar				
Links		#333399	8/12	Verdana, sans-serif	
Visited Links		#000066	8/12	Verdana, sans-serif	
Hovering over links		#006FEB	8/12	Verdana, sans-serif	
Active Links		#000066	8/12	Verdana, sans-serif	
Small gray notes	note				
Links		#666699	8	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Visited Links			8	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Hovering over links		#0066CC	8	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Active Links		#666666	8	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Breadcrumb trail	context				
Links		#666699	8	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Visited Links		#666699	8	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Hovering over links		#0066CC	8	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Active Links		#666699	8	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Quick Links	quick				
Links		#333CC			
Visited Links					
Hovering over links		#0066CC			
Active Links		#3333CC			
Small footer links	footer				
Links		#666666	7.5	Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Visited Links		#666666	7.5	Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Hovering over links		#333399	7.5	Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	underline
Active Links		#666666	7.5	Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	underline
Headings	head	#333399	18pt	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
	head2	#333399	16pt	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
	head3	#333399	14pt	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
	head4	#333399	12pt	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
	head5	#333399	10pt	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Sub head	subhead	#333333	12px	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Notes	note	#333333	8	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Captions	caption	#333333	8	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Breadcrumb text	context	#666699	8	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Footer text	footer	#333333	7.5	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Tiny text only	textonly	#333333	6	Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Small text	small	#333333	8	Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif	
Search form	form	#333333	11	Verdana, Arial, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Body text	bodytext	#333333	10	Verdana, Arial, Tahoma, sans-serif	
Bold body text (for Netscape 4)	boldbodytext	#333333	10	Verdana, Arial, Tahoma, sans-serif	

A style sheet has been set up with these fonts and can be called or copied on the primary DNR web servers from /standard/css/dnr.css.

Requirement 4. Top navigation bar

The top navigation bar is a critical consistency component for state web sites. The DNR top navigation bar contains the following elements:

- A hidden link to allow screen readers to skip beyond the navigation bar either above or to the left of the navigation bar.
- The height of the bar is 24 pixels.
- The width for the gold navigation bar should be a maximum of 780 pixels.
- The left-most item in the navigation bar is the Quarter State Seal graphic (at /images/state_home_icon.gif) and a definitive Alt tag reading “State of Alaska Home Page” that links to the State of Alaska’s home page (<http://www.state.ak.us/>).
- The Quarter State Seal graphic uses a background graphic at /images/state_home_icon_background.gif.
- Graduated yellow to white background for the navigation bar (at /images/header_background.gif)
- Department, division, unit or program specific links in a sans serif font
- Natural Resources graphic (at /images/naturalresources2.gif)
- Find box and find graphic (at /images/find.gif)

The links in the top navigation bar are specific to the area they are being used in. If you do not want to customize this area, use the links found on the DNR home page navigation bar.

The search on the top navigation bar should remain for all of DNR. If you want to have a more restrictive search, place an additional search box within your pages. If you do this, keep the location of your search box consistent across your pages. The results page for DNR searches allows the user to further restrict searches to Divisions within DNR.

Requirement 5. Meta Tags and titles

Be sure to include a page title with the <title> tags so that search engines can display the appropriate information about the web page. For search engine use, make sure the <title> tag is immediately after the <head> tag. Keep titles short but descriptive. Using 90 – 150 characters or less including any punctuation is recommended. Remember that if the page is bookmarked, this is what the person will see for the bookmark.

Use meta tags for description and keywords. This allows search engines to find information on your pages more effectively. Do not use the same keywords and description across the site. Use of other meta tags is optional. Examples of the two required meta tags are:

```
<META NAME="DESCRIPTION" CONTENT="Enter a two or three line description of your Web site">
<META NAME="KEYWORDS" CONTENT="Enter keywords prospects would use
to search for your site; separate each keyword by a space. Keywords may
be a single word or two-word phrases.">
```

Here are a few tips on selecting keywords:

- When choosing your keywords, try to think of what people who could benefit from your page might type into the search engine.
- Do not use common words like “and”, “of”, and “the”.
- If you use keywords that have nothing to do with your page or if you use the same keyword over and over many of the search engines will penalize you for this. Don’t use a keyword more than 3 times.
- Most search engines will index 1000 characters for keywords.
- Spaces rather than commas seem to work best.
- Use plural over singular.

If you have problems thinking of the keywords, you might try a couple free online tools to help generate keywords like <http://www.webmaster-toolkit.com/meta-tag-generator.shtml> or to count the usage of words in a page visit <http://www.webmaster-toolkit.com/keyword-analysis-tool.shtml>.

For the description, use an informative description around 250 characters or less. Include keyword phrases if possible. Do not use too many stop words (a, on, the, etc) as the search engines do not index them.

Requirement 6. Uniform breadcrumb trails

Breadcrumb trails are a navigational tool to show the current page relative to its parents. A breadcrumb trail may look like:

Land Offerings > Residential Over the Counter > Fall 2001 > Generally Allowed Uses on State Land

While good in theory, they are not dynamically generated on our pages. To hand code one path on a page and the user arrive using a different path will create confusion for the user. To prevent this confusion we only require the State of Alaska and Natural Resources links right under the page title graphic. They will look something like this:

State of Alaska > Natural Resources

You can include your division and subunit links in the breadcrumb trail if you so choose. The state standard for breadcrumb trails recommends no more than 5 items in the trail. The trail should be left justified in a sans-serif font style with the “greater than” symbol (>) used as a separator between items.

Requirement 7. Header

The state design requires that headers on pages use the Baker Signet font for text. The only way to utilize this font on the web is through incorporating it into a header graphic. For consistency and branding purposes, all DNR web pages have the following requirements. Divisions and Major Offices have additional requirements as outlined below.

General DNR Header Text Requirements

- Baker Signet Font
- For text within a photo, use white as the text color.
- For text not used within a photo, use the text color: #333399.
- Use a drop shadow with the following attributes (written for photoshop but most graphics apps have similar settings):
 - Mode: Multiply

- Opacity: 30
- Angle: 120
- Distance: 3 (can be varied with size of text for best effect)
- Blur: 5 (can be varied with size of text for best effect)
- Intensity: 30
- Global Angle checked
- The header will include the name of the Division/Office/Section/Unit/Program/Application and “Alaska Department of Natural Resources”.
- The name may be displayed in a photo banner or directly below it.
- When displayed within a photo the “Alaska Department of Natural Resources” text will be placed above the entity name. Otherwise the department will be listed below the entity name.
- The “Alaska Department of Natural Resources” text is displayed in a significantly smaller font size (approximately 1/3 to 1/4 the size of the entity name).
- The font size of the entity name will vary with the wording and graphics used.

General DNR Header Logo Requirement

- Either the standard DNR web logo or the Division/Office/Unit/Program/Application’s logo will be displayed on the left hand side of the header.
- The standard DNR web logo is found at /images/banners/dnrlogo75.jpg on the servers.

Division/Major Office Home Page Header Requirements

For consistency and branding purposes Division/Major Office home pages have additional header requirements for photo, logo and text displays.

Photo Requirement

- A photo will be used directly below the top navigation bar.

Logo Requirement

- Either the standard DNR web logo or an entity’s logo will be displayed below the photo.
- The logo will be on the left hand side of the screen and must be visible on the screen when the page is first displayed.

Header Text Requirements

- The header will include the name of the Division or Major Office.
- The text “Division of”, “Division”, “Office of”, “Office”, etc. may be left off the name in a header as long as the formal Division or Office name is visible elsewhere on the screen when the page is first displayed.

If you need assistance with creating the header graphic, please contact the DNR webmaster.

Requirement 8. Consistent Navigation

The State’s design recommends that the navigation links for a web site be placed on the right hand side of the page. It is up to the webmaster whether to follow this recommendation. Regardless of your navigation layout, use it consistently within related pages.

Requirement 9. Bottom of page information

Just above the footer of the page, include information about the date the page was last updated and an email or contacts link for the page content. Other items to consider including in this area are:

- Site optimized for Netscape 7, IE 6 or above.
- Not sure who to contact? Have a question about DNR? Visit the Public Information Center.
- Report technical problems with this page to the Webmaster.
- Phone numbers
- Physical mailing address

Requirement 10. Footer links and graphics

The graphics in the footer of the page are the same as the background and provide a curved appearance to the bottom of the page. Between the two graphics are the footer links in a sans-serif font. These links are for navigation and general information purposes. You may use more than one line for the footer links if you choose. The links in the footer are:

- At the bottom of the page there will be right and left justified rounded bottom corner graphics that match the background. These graphics are 5 pixels x 5 pixels in size.
- For web pages that are required to be wider than 780 pixels, these pages have the option to use a white background and not use the rounded footer corner graphics (see above "Footer" component in Page Background section).
- The left-most item in one line of the footer will be a link to the "State of Alaska"
- Natural Resources (linked to <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/>)
- Links to your Division and any sub units as appropriate for the page
- Copyright (linked to </standard/copyright.htm>)
- Privacy (linked to </standard/privacy.htm>)
- System Status (linked to </standard/systemstatus.cfm>)
- The background color for the footer must be the same as the primary body background.

Requirement 11. Page width

Due to the state web page design for the top navigation design, the overall width of a web page is 780 pixels. Try to keep your web page content to 650 pixels so that the pages are easily printable. This leaves 65 pixels of white space on each side of your content. The "safe print area" for a page is 539 x 672 pixels. If you can not keep your content within the 780 pixel framework, use an all white background and do not use the footer graphics.

Requirement 12. Page body

- A san-serif font style is required for primary body text.
- The primary body background should be white (#FFFFFF) as a foundation.

Sample code with requirements

Sample templates have been put together for [HTML](#) pages, server side include (ssi) pages, ColdFusion pages and Dreamweaver MX. These are listed on the webmasters page (<http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/int/webmasters>, contractors can view the templates at <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/webmasters>).

DNR Web Page Guidelines

Beyond web page requirements, there are a number of design and usability guidelines to assist in the development of DNR web pages. Those guidelines are covered in this section.

The federal government has developed a set of research-based web design and usability guidelines (http://usability.gov/guidelines/guidelines_notice.html). The federal guidelines that have research support for effectiveness (moderate to strong support) and that are considered important to the success of a web site are included in these guidelines. The federal guidelines are followed with the notation: (Chapter #:Guideline #). For more information on those guidelines, refer to the federal document.

Design Process and Evaluation

- Develop and test prototypes through an iterative design approach to create the most useful and usable website (1:2).
- Provide content that is engaging, relevant, and appropriate to the audience (1:4).
- Use all available resources to better understand users' requirements (1:6).
- Have several developers independently propose designs and use the best elements from each design (1:7).
- Select the right number of participants when using different usability techniques. Using too few may reduce the usability of a website; using too many wastes valuable resources (1:11).
- In order to have a high probability of being accessed, ensure that a website is in the "top thirty" references presented from a major search engine (1:12).
- Recognize that a strong individual and group tester bias seems to exist when evaluating the usability of websites (1:13).

Optimizing the User Experience

- Allow users to perform tasks in the same sequence and manner across similar conditions (2:5).
- Minimize the time required to download a websites' pages (2:6).
- Provide users with appropriate feedback while they are waiting (2:10).
- If reading speed is important, do not require users to perform other tasks while reading from the monitor (2:12).
- Do not require users to remember information from place to place on a website (2:13).

Accessibility

- Ensure that all information conveyed with color is also available without color (3:4).
- Do not use blinking items.

Page Layout

- Make page-length decisions that support the primary use of the web page (6:1).
- Use frames when certain functions must remain visible on the screen as the user accesses other information on the site (6:2).
- If you use frames, use NOFRAMES to provide an alternative view and use meaningful titles for each frame.
- Establish a high-to-low level of importance for information and infuse this approach throughout each page of the website (6:3).
- Place the most important items at the top center of the web page to facilitate user's finding the information (6:4).

- Put important, clickable items in the same locations and closer to the top of the page where their location can be better estimated (6:5).
- Structure pages so that items can be easily compared when users must analyze those items to discern similarities, differences, trends and relationships (6:6).
- Limit the amount of white space on pages that are used for scanning and searching (6:7).
- Visually align page elements, either vertically or horizontally (6:8).

Navigation

- Clearly differentiate navigation elements from one another but group and place them in a consistent and easy to find place on each page (7:4).
- Use site maps for websites that have many pages (7:7).
- Use sequential menus for simple forward-moving tasks and use simultaneous menus for tasks that would otherwise require numerous uses of the back button (7:8).

Scrolling and Paging

- Use an appropriate page layout to eliminate the need for users to scroll horizontally (8:1).
- Use longer, scrolling pages when users are reading for comprehension (8:2).

Headings, Titles and Labels

- Ensure that category labels, including links, clearly reflect the information and items contained within the category (9:1).
- Use descriptive headings liberally throughout a website (9:4).

Links

- Provide sufficient clues to clearly indicate to users that an item is clickable (10:1).
- Use text links rather than image links (10:3).
- Use link labels and concepts that are meaningful, understandable, and easily differentiated by users rather than designers (10:4).
- Make the link text consistent with the title or headings on the destination (i.e. target) page (10:5).
- When using embedded links, the link text should accurately describe the link's destination (10:6).
- Ensure that important content can be accessed from more than one link (10:7).
- When using links at the top of the document that jump down further on the page, include a "back to top" link. Try to include the "back to top" link within a screen or two of the original jump point or at the closest logical break point. Also use a "back to top" link at logical break points to provide the reader with a means of navigating longer documents.

Links to Commercial Sites

In order to avoid the appearance of favoritism to a commercial organization, restrict your links outside of DNR to other government entities, State or DNR approved contractors and sole-source permittees, publicly funded or non-profit organizations.

When linking to an outside entity, it is recommended to:

- Have an intermediary web page stating that the user is leaving the State of Alaska web site and going to a commercial site. Consider including two buttons on this page - one to continue, another to return to the State of Alaska or DNR web page.

- Have the commercial site open in a second web browser window by adding target="_blank" to the href (link) statement. Also consider adding statement by those links that "All external sites will open in a new browser. DNR does not endorse external sites." The second browser window accomplishes two things:
 - It reiterates and supports the concept that this web site is separate from the State of Alaska web site.
 - It keeps the State of Alaska web site open on the user's computer. There are some sites that have hidden web page coding that prevents the user from using the back button on their browser to leave the current web site and return to the previous web site.
- Note: It is recognized that some users dislike the automatic opening of additional web browser windows. In this case, the advantages to the State outweigh this concern.

Sample HTML coding for intermediary web pages

Page Title

```

<!-- Start Page Title --->
<a name="skip_nav"></a>&nbsp;<p>
  <span class="head">You are leaving the State of Alaska web site</span>
<p>
<!-- Right Side Spacer --->

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Page Content

```

<!-- Start Page Body --->
<p>Click the "close" button to return to the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation
web page, or click the "continue" button to go to the web site of the permitted
operator - Nomad Shelter, Inc. at <EM>www.nomadshelter.com</EM>. </p>

```

```

<DIV ALIGN="CENTER">
  <TABLE>
    <TR>
      <TD>
        <TABLE BORDER="2" CELLPADDING="2" CELLSPACING="2">
          <TR>
            <TD BGCOLOR="#CCCCCC" width="75" ALIGN="CENTER">
              <a href="javascript:window.close(self)">Close</a>
            </TD>
          </TR>
        </TABLE>
      </TD>
      <TD WIDTH="75">&nbsp;<BR>
    </TD>
    <TD>
      <TABLE BORDER="2" CELLPADDING="2" CELLSPACING="2">
        <TR>
          <TD BGCOLOR="#CCCCCC" width="75" ALIGN="CENTER">
            <A HREF="http://www.nomadshelter.com">Continue</A>
          </TD>
        </TR>
      </TABLE>
    </TD>
  </TABLE>

```

```

        </TABLE>
    </TD>
</TR>
</TABLE>
</DIV>
<!-- End Body of Page -->

```

Text Appearance

- When users are expected to rapidly read and understand prose text, use black text on a plain, high-contrast, non-patterned background (11:1).
- Ensure visual consistency of website elements within and between web pages (11:2).
- Use at least a 12 point font (e.g. typeface) on all web pages (11:4).
- Use a familiar font to achieve the best possible reading speed (11:5).
- Change the font characteristics to emphasize the importance of a word or short phrase (11:6).

Lists

- Arrange lists and tasks in an order that best facilitates efficient and successful user performance (12:1).
- Display a series of related items in a vertical list rather than as continuous text (12:2).
- Provide an introductory heading (i.e. word or phrase) at the top of each list (12:3).
- Make lists easy to scan and understand (12:4).
- Try to restrict the number of links in each document. People can track only so many items at a time. Keep the upper limit between 7 to 12 items per screen if possible. If you have more than 12 items, try to group the links into sets.

Screen-based Controls

- Design data entry transactions so that users can stay with one entry method as long as possible (13:14).

Graphics

- Use video, animation and audio only when they help to convey, or are supportive of, the website's message or other content (14:1).
- Use graphics when it visually contributes to the meaning. Too many graphics slows the viewing of the document and taxes the patience of viewers.
- Place your organization's logo in a consistent place on every page (14:2).
- Ensure that all clickable images are either labeled or readily understood by typical users (14:5).
- Take steps to ensure that images on the website do not slow page download times unnecessarily (14:6).
- Do not make important images look like banner advertisements or gratuitous decorations (14:8).
- Use background images sparingly and make sure they are simple, especially if they are used behind text (14:9).
- Include actual data values with graphical displays of data when precise reading of the data is required (14:10).
- Use height and width dimensions for images whenever possible to speed loading of the web page.
- Avoid using the height and width tags to resize graphics; instead resize the graphic and save it via a graphics program to the size you need.
- The location for shared images on the DNR web site is the /images directory. Contact the DNR webmaster if you want a graphic added to this location.
- Use client-side image maps instead of server side image maps except where the regions cannot be defined with an available geometric shape. Provide redundant text links for each active region of a server side image map.

- All images are invested with copyright by default, regardless of whether a copyright statement is displayed. If you are using photographs, graphic elements or any other type of original work be sure to list the name of its creator. If you want to use someone's icon or image, the easiest thing is simply to ask the owner. For more information on copyrights, see the US Copyright Office home page at <http://lcWeb.loc.gov/copyright/>.

Writing Web Content

- Display continuous (prose) text using mixed upper- and lowercase letters (15:4).
- Do not use words that typical users may not understand (15:5).
- Because the World Wide Web is international, try to keep use of idioms to a minimum for readers who have English as a second language.
- Use the clearest and simplest language appropriate for your site's content.
- Carefully select images or symbols keeping in mind some may be culturally specific and may not be understood universally or internationally.
- Keep the use of acronyms to a minimum. If using an acronym, spell it out the first time it is used in a document and follow it with the acronym in parenthesis.
- Include the primary theme of a paragraph, and the scope of what it covers, in the first sentence of each paragraph (15:6).
- Compose sentences in active rather than passive voice (15:7).
- To optimize reading comprehension, minimize the number of words in sentences and the number of sentences in paragraphs (15:9).
- When specifying dates the preferred format is month dd, yyyy such as July 4, 1776. Spell out the month. Other common date formats such as 07/04/76 and have conflicting alternatives such as 04/07/76 that may be misinterpreted.
- The over use of 'Click Here' should be avoided. Instead use text that makes sense when read out of context.

Content Organization

- Organize information at each level of the website so that it shows a clear and logical structure to typical users (16:1).
- Structure each content page to facilitate scanning: use clear, well-located headings; short phrases and sentences; and small readable paragraphs (16:3).
- Group all related information and functions in order to decrease time spent searching or scanning (16:4).
- Limit page information only to that which is needed by users while on that page (16:5).
- Design quantitative information to reduce the time required to understand it (16:8).

Search

- Ensure that the results of user searches provide the precise information being sought and in a format that matches users' expectations (17:2).
- Structure the search engine to accommodate users who enter one or two keywords (17:3).
- Construct a websites' search engine to respond to users' terminology (17:6).

File Naming Standards

- Use all lower case for file names and URLs to help to eliminate errors, confusion and frustrations on the part of people using our web site.
- It is recommended to use the .htm file extension for HTML files (as opposed to .html).

- Filenames should accurately represent the content of the page.
- Do not use special characters in filenames; e.g., &, \$, *, %, etc. (example: land&water.htm).
- Do not use spaces between words (example: use landsales.htm, not land sales.htm).
- Even though most web servers handle underscores (_) you should refrain from using them because they are difficult to read in a URL address.
- Use index.cfm, index.html, index.htm in a directory as your home page. That way the web address can end with the directory name. For example: <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/pic/> vs <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/pic/indexhome.htm>

Recommended Meta Tags

In addition to the two required meta tags, it is recommended to use the date and author meta tags to help identify when the file was created and who created the file. Use the date format of YYYYMMDD when specifying the date. The general format for these two meta tags are:

```
<META NAME = "DATE" CONTENT = "YYYYMMDD">
<META NAME = "AUTHOR" CONTENT = "Your name">
```

Browser Compatibility

Avoid formatting a document to look good in only one browser and avoid using coding that works in only one browser. If you modify a document so it displays a certain way in one browser, it may end up looking bad in another browser. DNR supports the current and second most recent browser version for Netscape and Microsoft Internet Explorer.

Moving Pages/Site Redesign

If you must delete or move a document then leave in its place a document indicating that the original has been moved or deleted and ask anyone pointing to the document to change their links. If it has moved, include a link indicating the new location of the document. This “We’ve moved” page needs to be in place for a minimum of 6 months. An example of the meta tag to auto advance to another page is:

```
<META HTTP-EQUIV="refresh" CONTENT="5; URL="http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/path_for_new_webpage/new.html">
```

If you move a web page, be sure to let the Public Information Center web master (picweb@dnr.state.ak.us) know which links are changing and their new addresses. This is critical so that the site index, frequently asked questions and many other topic links continue to function.

Web Page Testing

Your web page may look great on your system but how will it look on other peoples’ computers? Is the coding, spelling and grammar correct? Once you have a page that you feel is ready for prime time, start testing it. Before publishing a web page, it is the responsibility of each web page author to ensure that the page is:

- accurate (spelling, grammar, proper coding, images viewable, links work)
- current (remove old, inactive pages and let people know where the current information is)
- identified with a uniform indication of origin and responsible authority
- compatible with the current and second most recent browser version for Netscape and Microsoft Internet Explorer
- quickly and easily accessible